CLAIMS

1   A digital image production apparatus comprising:

2   a print engine having a plurality of trays each of which is capable of

3   accommodating different types of recording sheets;

4   a user interface; and

5   an electronic control system for controlling print processing, including control of

6   supply of recording sheets from the trays in accordance with sheet specifications of

7   print jobs,

8   wherein the control system has access to a memory which stores for each tray the

9   type of recording sheets presently accommodated therein, and;

10   wherein, when recording sheets of a type required for a job are not available in

11 any of the trays, the control system:

12   indicates, through the user interface, the required type of recording sheet;

13   selects an eligible tray that can accommodate the required recording

14 sheets;

15   invites, through the user interface, an operator to place recording sheets of

16   the required type in the eligible tray; and

17   automatically, in response to receiving a confirmation signal which

18   confirms that the operator has completed the requested action, presumes that the

19   installed recording sheets are of the required type and stores information

20   specifying the required type of recording sheet in a location of the memory

21   associated with said eligible tray.

1   2. The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein, if at least one tray contains sheets

2   of a type that is not needed for the current job nor any other job scheduled for processing

3   so as to represent at least one non-targeted tray, the control system selects one of the at

4   least one non-targeted trays as the eligible tray.

1   3. The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the confirmation signal is a signal

2   indicating that a start button of the apparatus has been actuated.

1   4. The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the required type of recording sheet

2   and the eligible tray are presented to the user in the form of a dialog on a display screen

3   of the user interface.

1   5. The apparatus according to claim 1, further including means for replicating the
2   user interface on a display screen of a workstation connected to the printer through a
3   network.

1   6. The apparatus according to claim 5, wherein, when the workstation is online, the
2   message indicating a request for loading recording sheets for a specific print job is
3   forcibly offered to the user on the workstation, irrespective of whether or not a print
4   monitor function is activated in the workstation.

1   7. The apparatus according to claim 5, wherein the apparatus is connected, through
2   the network, with at least two user terminals, and wherein the message indicating the
3   required type of recording sheet and the eligible tray is sent to at least two of said user
4   terminals at different timings.

1   8. A digital image production apparatus comprising:
2   a print engine having a plurality of trays each of which is capable of
3   accommodating different types of recording sheets;
4   a user interface; and
5   an electronic control system for controlling print processing, including control of
6   supply of recording sheets from the trays in accordance with sheet specifications of
7   print jobs,
8   wherein the control system has access to a memory which stores for each tray the
9   type of recording sheets presently accommodated therein, and
10 wherein, when recording sheets of a type required for a job are not available in
11 any of the trays, the control system:
12 indicates, through the user interface, the required type of recording sheet
13 and at least one eligible tray that could be used to accommodate the required
14 recording sheets;
15 invites an operator to place the recording sheets of the required type in
16 one of said eligible trays and to specify through the user interface the specific eligible tray
17 he has filled; and
18 automatically, in response to a signal generated by the operator specifying
19 said specific tray, presumes that the installed recording sheets are of the required type
20 and stores information specifying the required type of recording sheet in a location of the

21   memory associated with said specific eligible tray.

1   9. The apparatus according to claim 8, wherein an eligible tray is a tray containing

2   sheets of a type that is not needed for the current job nor any other job scheduled for

3   processing, if any.

1   10. The apparatus according to claim 8, wherein the signal generated by the

2   operator is a signal indicating that an eligible tray contains sheets and which is received

3   after a signal indicating that the same eligible tray was empty.

1   11. The apparatus according to claim 8, wherein the required type of recording

2   sheet and the eligible trays are presented to the user in the form of a dialog window on a

3   display screen of the user interface.

1   12. A digital image production apparatus comprising:

2   a print engine having a plurality of trays each of which is capable of

3   accommodating different types of recording sheets;

4   a user interface; and

5   an electronic control system for controlling print processing, including control of

6   supply of recording sheets from the trays in accordance with sheet specifications of print

7   jobs,

8   wherein the control system has access to a memory which stores for each tray the

9   type of recording sheets presently accommodated therein, and

10   wherein, when recording sheets of a type required for a job are not available in

11   any of the trays, the control system:

12   indicates, through the user interface, the required type of recording sheet;

13   invites an operator to place recording sheets of the required type in one of

14   said trays and to specify through the user interface the specific tray he has filled;

15   and

16   automatically, upon an operator command for the purpose from the user

17   interface, stores information specifying the indicated type of recording sheet in a

18   location of the memory associated with said specific tray.